

the function of our current health care system is not to provide quality health care to every man, woman, and child, but, in fact, to allow people within the industry—the private insurance companies, the drug companies, the medical device suppliers—to make as much money as they possibly can.

Amazingly enough, according to the papers in the last few days, the health care industry has spent over \$130 million in the last quarter on lobbying. There are 100 Members in the Senate and 435 Members of the House—to spend \$130 million?

Where do they get that money? They get that money, if they are a drug company, by charging the American people the highest prices in the entire world. I was the first Member of Congress to take Americans over the Canadian border a number of years ago where women with breast cancer who were fighting for their lives were able to pick up breast cancer medicine at one-tenth the price. The drug companies cannot lower prices in this country—they have to charge us the highest prices in the world—but somehow they do manage to come up with tens and tens of millions of dollars to try to buy Members of the Congress.

While more and more people are losing their health insurance, we are seeing many of these private insurance companies seeing huge increases in their profits. We are seeing the insurance companies, the drug companies paying, in some cases, tens of millions of dollars in compensation packages to their CEOs.

For anybody to suggest that this country does not need health care reform is simply not to understand what is going on from one end of this country to the other. We are a great nation. There is no reason in the world why we should end up spending almost twice as much per person on health care as any other nation and yet have inferior health care outcomes in terms of infant mortality, in terms of life expectancy, in terms of preventable deaths.

We can do better. And right now, despite all of the lobbying money coming in from the health care industry, the moral imperative is for Members of Congress to think about the folks back home, the people who have no health insurance, the people who are underinsured, the people who are going bankrupt, the people who are staying at their work, not because they want to but because they have a decent health insurance program or the small business people who cannot invest in their company because they are busy spending all of their money on health care. We can do better than that. We must do better than that. Now is the time.

I hope the American people work with us in standing up to very powerful special interests and moving us toward real health care reform.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I want to briefly, before he leaves the floor, com-

mend my friend and colleague from Vermont. He has been a remarkable advocate, and this evening is yet one more example of it. He speaks with that passion I love to hear about these issues and talks about real people and what they go through every day.

I was thinking as he was talking, I say to Senator SANDERS, there is a wonderful small business guy in Connecticut named Penn Ritter. I have known his family a long time. He got up and talked about his business and how difficult it has been to buy health care for his employees. He talked about one particular case which is very moving.

They were laying people off. The economy was down. They didn't need people. One of the people they were going to lay off had terminal cancer. He knew if he laid him off, he would have no access to the kind of health care coverage he would need to go through the difficult period he was about to go through. But the verdict was clear. This small business decided this was not going to happen. So they kept the man on, not because they could afford to keep him on—because they couldn't afford it—but in good conscience they couldn't do that. There are people like that in small businesses all across our country, in every community in which we reside, who make a difference every day. There are wonderful providers and hospitals and places that take in people and treat them every single day. I would like to see us, in this Congress, at least rise to the level of our citizenry who do these things every day—the Penn Ritters of America, the doctors who work at Manchester Memorial Hospital in Connecticut, those people who work at AmeriCare, those volunteer doctors who show up every day. I could go down a long list, and every one of us can talk about what happens in our communities by caring people who help people maneuver and navigate in a difficult time during this health care crisis.

The least we should be able to do is to figure out how to meet the challenges they meet every single day, and my colleague from Vermont is as eloquent as any other Member on this subject matter, and I thank him for his comments.

Mr. SANDERS. I thank my colleague very much.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE—H.R. 2997

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Tuesday, August

4, at 10:30 a.m., the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the following amendments in the order listed; that prior to the second vote, there be 2 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled in the usual form; and that the time for the second vote be limited to 10 minutes: McCain amendment No. 1912 and McCain amendment No. 2030; that no amendment be in order to either amendment prior to the vote; and that following the second vote, the Senate then recess until 2:15 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMENDING NEVADA ASSOCIATION FOR LATIN AMERICANS, INC.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise to call the attention of the Senate to the 40th anniversary of the Nevada Association for Latin Americans, Inc. NALA is a Las Vegas-based organization that strives to provide low to moderate income families educational and social services to enhance their quality of life. NALA aids the people in the Silver State with exceptional services in education, language immersion, health prevention and immigration.

NALA was established as a nonprofit organization in 1969. As a Hispanic social-service organization, NALA acquired a small daycare center in 1978. At the time it was serving mainly African-American families, but now the center serves all low-income members of the community. The Social Services that NALA offers include emergency rental, utility assistance, food vouchers, and food pantry assistance to individuals who qualify for assistance. During these difficult economic times where many families are in dire need, we are grateful for NALA's excellent services and resources.

The association's affordable preschool/childcare program benefits more than 400 children annually. The preschool program includes an exceptional ESL program and meals for the children. Many of these children become so well versed in English, that most become teachers to their limited-English speaking parents. NALA offers HIV prevention services and outreach to those living with AIDS through counseling, health care, and job training. In addition to their educational and health outreach, NALA offers immigration services through their targeted program that assists with application processing, naturalization preparation and employment referrals.

I praise the Nevada Association for Latin Americans, Inc. for their 40 years of support to the low-income community of Nevada. It is through the hard work of organizations like NALA that low-income families across Nevada and the United States will be able to overcome the challenges of our current economy.